

REMARKS

I. Introduction

Claims 14 to 27 are pending in the present application. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for immediate allowance, and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Applicants express appreciation for the acknowledgment of the claim for foreign priority and the indication that copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received from the International Bureau.

Applicants further express appreciation for the acknowledgment of the Information Disclosure Statement filed on May 9, 2005 and the Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement filed on August 13, 2008.

II. Objection to Drawings

The drawings were objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a) as allegedly failing to show all features of the invention specified in the claims. It is respectfully submitted that this objection should be withdrawn for at least the following reasons.

Figure 2A has been amended, *inter alia*, to indicate details A, B and C, and new Figures 3A, 3B and 3C have been drafted to illustrate details A, B and C, respectively. In addition, the Specification has been amended to reflect the changes made to the drawings. Support for Figures 3A, 3B and 3C may be respectively found, for example, on page 2, lines 27 to 30 of the Specification, as well as in claim 9 as originally filed; in claim 1 as originally filed; and on page 5, lines 4 to 6 of the Specification. In the embodiment shown in Figure 3A, inner diameter ID1 of first section 9 is greater than inner diameter ID2 of second section 10 and wall thickness WT1 of the first section 9 is equal to wall thickness WT2 of second section. In the embodiment shown in Figure 3C, the diameters of bore holes 8 in second section 10 increase in a downstream direction. No new matter has been added to the Drawings or the Specification. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the drawings show all features specified in the claims.

In view of all of the foregoing, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

III. Rejection of Claims 14 to 22 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 14 to 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0108309 (“Grieve et al.”). It is respectfully submitted that Grieve et al. does not anticipate these claims for at least the following reasons.

Claim 14 relates to an atomization system for a fuel, including: a fuel injector; an atomization tube including at least a first section and a second section, the first section having at least one of an outer diameter and a wall thickness that is different than that of the second section; an air inlet; and at least one metering aperture.

Although Applicants may not agree with the merits of the rejection, to facilitate matters, claim 14 has been amended to recite, in relevant part, that “the atomization tube is formed in one piece having only one axis of symmetry”. Support for this amendment may be found, for example, in Figures 1, 2A and 2B.

Grieve et al. does not disclose, or even suggest, at least the above-mentioned feature. “As is apparent from Figure 2 of Grieve et al., piping (105), which the Office Action considers to constitute, together with main reformer (102), a second section of an atomization tube, has two segments oriented perpendicularly to an axis of symmetry of main reformer (102) and one section oriented parallelly to, but not coincident with, the axis of symmetry of main reformer (102)”. Therefore, main reformer (102), piping (105) and microreformer (120), the combination of which the Office Action considers to constitute an atomization tube, are not formed in one piece having only one axis of symmetry. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Grieve et al. does not anticipate claim 14 for at least these reasons.

As for claims 15 to 22, which ultimately depend from claim 14 and therefore include all of the features of claim 14, it is respectfully submitted that Grieve et al. does not anticipate these dependent claims for at least the reasons set forth above.

IV. Rejection of Claims 23 to 27 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 23 to 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Grieve et al. It is respectfully submitted that Grieve et al. does not render these claims unpatentable for at least the following reasons.

As an initial matter, claim 25 has been amended to eliminate a few typographical errors.

Claims 23 to 27 ultimately depend from claim 14 and therefore include all of the features of claim 14. As set forth in detail in Section III of this response, Grieve et al. does not disclose, or even suggest, all of the features of claim 14. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Grieve et al. does not render unpatentable claims 23 to 27, which depend from claim 14.

As for claims 23 and 24, it is respectfully submitted that Grieve et al. does not render these claims unpatentable for the following additional reasons. As admitted on page 5, lines 1 to 4 of the Office Action, Grieve et al. does not disclose, or even suggest, the feature of claim 23 that a wall thickness of a first section of an atomization tube equals a wall thickness of a second section of the atomization tube, or the feature of claim 24 that diameters of bore holes in the second section of the atomization tube increase per level in a downstream direction. In addition, contrary to the contentions appearing on page 5, lines 4 to 8 of the Office Action, 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a) nowhere states or implies that Applicants' alleged failure to include the above-mentioned features in the drawings allows the Examiner to interpret these features as conventional features. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Grieve et al. does not render claims 23 and 24 unpatentable for these additional reasons.

In view of all of the foregoing, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

V. Conclusion

It is therefore respectfully submitted that the presently pending claims are allowable. All issues raised by the Examiner having been addressed, an early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: January 22, 2009

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